

Thomas Hart Benton to Andrew Jackson, April 24, 1840, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

class=MsoNormal>THOMAS H. BENTON TO JACKSON.

Washington, April 24, 1840.

Dear Sir, I have this moment had the gratification to receive your two letters, and as one of them relates to a point which has been much on my mind, I am able to answer it at once so as to show how the question stands among us at present, and what the opinions of our friends are in relation to. I have never doubted but that Gov. Polk was the proper person for the democracy to support for the Vice Presidency, and on this head, and the under current, which works against him, I explained myself fully to Judge Catron. I found out the under current early in the session through friends of mine from Missouri, who were worked upon by Calhoun's friends, and, for the instant, made wrong. I am for Gov. Polk, and am certain that he is the strongest man we can put on our ticket. My information authorizes me to say he is the strongest in New York as well as in so many other States. But the under current has been at work for our old friend Johnson, who upon a fair trial fell so far behind the strength of his party at the last election; and as Virginia will not go into the convention, his advantage there would be considerable. In view of all this, Mr. Wright, Mr. Allen, and many other of our friends are for no nomination, and using the names of the most popular candidate in different States, and if it should come to the Senate, we shall still be safe. This is about our view at present; and it is probable that there 0084 60 will be a meeting of all our friends tomorrow evening, and that this view will be sanctioned. If so the Convention will nominate Mr. V. B. and leave the second office open. I will write you again, and let you know what we conclude on. I entirely concur with you, and think, after our friend fell so far behind the strength of his party, he ought to be slow to put himself

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forward; and to do him justice, he talks very reasonably on the subject, and says the party, as far as he is concerned, can do just as they please, and he will be content. . . .